



### CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS LOOKING FOR WORK, AUSTRALIA, JULY 1983 (PRELIMINARY)

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#### MAIN FEATURES

*Note: Survey estimates are subject to sampling variability, as explained in paragraph 9 below.*

In July 1983, 591,700 were seeking full-time employment (an increase of 220,800 since July 1982). Of these 516,200 (87.2 per cent) were registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service.

79,500 persons (an increase of 11,100 since July 1982) were looking for part-time work and 27.5 per cent of these were registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service.

222,500 (33.1 per cent) persons looking for work reported that their main difficulty in finding a job was that there were no vacancies at all and a further 124,200 (18.5 per cent) reported that there were no vacancies in their line of work.

26.3 per cent (20.3 per cent in July 1982) of persons looking for work had a current duration of unemployment of 52 weeks or more.

56.5 per cent (43.8 per cent in July 1982) of persons looking for work who had been wage and salary earners in their last job had been retrenched and a further 11.2 per cent (13.8 per cent in July 1982) had been in temporary or seasonal work.

#### EXPLANATORY NOTES

##### Introduction

In association with the July 1983 labour force survey conducted throughout Australia, persons who had been recently looking for work were asked about their difficulties in finding a job; educational attainment; steps taken to find work; whether they had had offers of employment and particulars of last job, if any.

2. During the two weeks beginning Monday 11 July 1983 specially trained interviewers asked the questions of those of the 70,000 respondents in the July labour force survey who fell within the scope of this survey.

3. This publication contains only a summary of the results of the survey. Estimates shown are preliminary and may be revised. Further information which will be published as soon as possible is available on request. Results of similar surveys, the first conducted in May 1976 have been published in *Characteristics of Persons Looking for Work, Australia* (6222.0).

##### Scope

4. The survey includes all persons aged fifteen years and over who were looking for work except:

- (a) certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from census and estimated populations;
- (b) overseas residents in Australia;
- (c) dependants of non-Australian defence forces personnel stationed in Australia, and
- (d) students boarding at school, persons permanently unable to work, some patients in hospitals and sanatoria and inmates of reformatories, jails, etc.

##### Definitions

5. *Active steps to find work* includes writing, telephoning or applying in person to an employer for work; answering a newspaper advertisement for a job; checking factory or Commonwealth Employment Service noticeboards; being registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service; checking or registering with any other employment agency; advertising or tendering for work; and contacting friends or relatives.

6. For this survey *persons looking for work* are defined as all persons aged 15 years and over within the scope of the survey who were not employed during the survey week (i.e. the week immediately preceding that in which the interview took place), had actively looked for full-time or part-time work at any time in the four weeks up to the end of the survey week, and:

- (a) were available for work in the survey week, or would have been available except for temporary illness (i.e. lasting for less than four weeks to the end of the survey week); or
- (b) are waiting to start a new job within four weeks from the end of the survey week and would have started in the survey week if the job had been available then.

7. The number of persons looking for work differs from the number of *unemployed persons* published in *The Labour Force, Australia, July 1983* (6203.0) in that the latter *includes* persons who are waiting to be called back to a full-time or part-time job from which they have been stood down without pay for less than four weeks up to the end of the survey week (including the whole of the survey week) for reasons other than bad weather or plant breakdown. Furthermore, for a small number of persons classified as unemployed in the labour force survey the additional information necessary for this survey could not be obtained. Although the estimation procedures take account of this, estimates for some characteristics are affected.

8. *Duration of unemployment* is the period from the time the person began looking for work or was laid off to the end of the survey week. Periods of unemployment are recorded in complete weeks and this results in a slight understatement of duration. *Average (mean) duration* is the duration obtained by dividing the aggregate number of weeks a group has been unemployed by the number of persons in that group. *Median duration* is the duration which divides unemployed persons into two equal groups, one comprising persons whose duration of unemployment is above the median and the other, persons whose duration is below it.

#### Reliability of the estimates

9. Estimates in this publication are subject to two sources of error:

- (a) *sampling error*: since the estimates are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings they are subject to sampling variability; that is they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the *standard error*. More information about this topic will be found in *The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0). A table of estimated standard errors for this survey follows these notes. Estimates with a standard error of more than about 27 per cent have not been shown in this publication, as the degree of sampling variability would seriously

detract from their value for most reasonable uses. Although figures for these small components can, in some cases, be derived by subtraction they should not be regarded as reliable.

- (b) *non-sampling error*: inaccuracies may occur because of imperfections in reporting by interviewers and respondents and errors made in the coding and processing of data. These inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample. Every effort is made to reduce the non-sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers and efficient operating procedures.

#### Related publications

10. Other ABS publications which may be of interest include:

*The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0)—issued monthly

*Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Families, Australia, July 1982* (6224.0)

*Labour Force Experience, Australia, During the Period February 1981 to February 1982* (6206.0)

*Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia* (6220.0)—surveyed twice-yearly (March and September)

11. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

#### Symbols and other usages

- \* subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. See paragraph 9 above.

... not applicable

CES Commonwealth Employment Service

12. Because figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

**R. J. CAMERON**  
Australian Statistician

#### STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATES

Size of estimate (Persons)	Approximate standard error of estimate		Size of estimate (Persons)	Approximate standard error of estimate	
	Persons	Per cent of estimate		Persons	Per cent of estimate
3,000	800	26.7	50,000	2,900	5.8
4,000	900	22.5	100,000	3,900	3.9
5,000	1,000	20.0	200,000	5,100	2.6
10,000	1,400	14.0	300,000	6,000	2.0
20,000	2,000	10.0	500,000	7,200	1.4

**TABLE 1. PERSONS LOOKING FOR WORK : DURATION OF CURRENT PERIOD OF UNEMPLOYMENT, MAIN DIFFICULTY IN FINDING WORK AND STEPS TAKEN TO FIND WORK, JULY 1983**

	Duration of current period of unemployment (weeks)								
	1 and under 4	4 and under 8	8 and under 13	13 and under 26	26 and under 52	52 and over	Total	Average duration	Median duration
	—' 000—							—weeks—	
Main difficulty in finding work—									
Own ill health or handicap	*	*	*	*	5.3	12.2	25.1	68.0	42.1
Employers consider too young/old	4.3	4.1	5.9	14.6	23.8	31.2	83.8	56.3	34.1
Unsuitable hours	*	*	*	3.0	*	*	14.8	30.2	16.1
Too far to travel/transport problems	3.1	*	*	4.0	5.6	7.7	25.3	43.3	26.1
Lack necessary skills/education	3.4	7.0	3.8	8.9	15.6	15.1	53.8	46.3	28.1
Language difficulties	*	*	*	*	*	3.3	10.3	42.9	30.1
Insufficient work experience	5.9	4.7	4.9	6.9	18.2	14.6	55.2	40.1	28.0
No vacancies in line of work	19.4	11.9	16.6	21.3	32.4	22.7	124.2	28.9	21.0
No vacancies at all	21.2	22.6	23.7	38.5	59.1	57.5	222.5	38.2	26.1
Other difficulties	4.5	3.5	*	7.5	7.0	8.2	32.6	37.8	23.0
No difficulties	13.1	3.2	*	*	*	*	23.7	15.2	3.0
Active steps taken to find work—									
Registered with the CES and—									
Contacted prospective employers	35.5	38.0	46.1	82.7	141.9	140.5	484.6	44.0	28.1
Took other steps	7.1	3.8	3.4	5.5	8.4	8.1	36.2	32.3	20.8
Total registered with CES(a)	45.0	43.3	51.0	90.7	154.4	153.6	538.0	43.1	28.1
Not registered with the CES and—									
Contacted prospective employers	30.4	17.4	14.1	18.3	18.1	20.1	118.4	26.8	11.1
Checked CES noticeboards	*	*	*	*	*	*	7.5	27.5	8.0
Took other steps	*	*	*	*	*	*	7.3	30.0	8.0
Total not registered with CES	35.1	19.2	16.4	19.0	20.6	22.8	133.2	27.0	10.0
Total	80.2	62.5	67.4	109.7	175.0	176.5	671.2	39.9	26.1

(a) Includes a small number of persons who had taken no other active steps.

**TABLE 2. PERSONS LOOKING FOR WORK : WHETHER LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME WORK AND STEPS TAKEN TO FIND WORK, JULY 1983 ('000)**

Active steps taken to find work	Looking for full-time work			Looking for part-time work			Total		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
Registered with the CES and—									
Contacted prospective employers	339.6	127.1	466.7	5.2	12.8	18.0	344.8	139.8	484.6
Took other steps	24.0	9.6	33.6	*	*	*	24.9	11.3	36.2
Total registered with CES(a)	373.7	142.4	516.2	6.4	15.4	21.9	380.2	157.9	538.0
Not registered with the CES and—									
Contacted prospective employers	26.6	41.9	68.5	12.5	37.5	49.9	39.0	79.4	118.4
Checked CES noticeboards	*	3.6	4.7	*	*	*	*	5.4	7.5
Took other steps	*	*	*	*	3.4	5.0	3.0	4.2	7.3
Total not registered with CES	29.2	46.4	75.5	15.0	42.7	57.7	44.1	89.1	133.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>402.9</b>	<b>188.8</b>	<b>591.7</b>	<b>21.4</b>	<b>58.1</b>	<b>79.5</b>	<b>424.3</b>	<b>246.9</b>	<b>671.2</b>

(a) Includes a small number of persons who had taken no other active steps.



**TABLE 3. PERSONS LOOKING FOR WORK : DURATION AND NUMBER OF PERIODS OF UNEMPLOYMENT(a)  
IN PREVIOUS TWELVE MONTHS(b), JULY 1983**  
( ' 000)

Number of periods of unemployment in previous twelve months	Duration of unemployment in previous twelve months (weeks)							52	Total
	1 and under 2	2 and under 4	4 and under 8	8 and under 13	13 and under 26	26 and under 39	39 and under 52		
MALES									
One	9.6	18.7	21.1	30.5	49.8	78.8	35.1	115.0	358.6
Two	..	*	*	5.7	12.4	14.4	10.9	..	46.0
Three or more	..	*	3.0		7.3	6.2	3.1	..	19.8
Total	9.6	19.8	23.3	38.5	69.6	99.4	49.1	115.0	424.3
FEMALES									
One	12.4	15.9	15.8	17.8	32.8	40.6	16.8	61.5	213.6
Two	..	*	*	4.0	7.8	5.7	4.8	..	25.3
Three or more	..	*	*	3.1		4.3		..	8.1
Total	12.4	17.7	17.7	22.9	42.7	48.5	23.7	61.5	246.9
PERSONS									
One	22.0	34.6	36.9	48.3	82.6	119.4	51.9	176.5	572.1
Two	..	*	*	9.7	20.3	20.1	15.7	..	71.2
Three or more	..	*	*	3.4	9.4	8.4	5.1	..	27.9
Total	22.0	37.4	41.0	61.4	112.3	147.9	72.8	176.5	671.2

(a) Summation of all periods including current period of unemployment. (b) Up to and including the survey week.

**TABLE 4. PERSONS LOOKING FOR WORK WHO WERE WAGE OR SALARY EARNERS IN THEIR LAST FULL-TIME JOB  
LASTING TWO WEEKS OR MORE AND WHO FINISHED WORKING IN THAT JOB IN THE TWO YEARS ENDING JULY 1982 :  
DURATION OF JOB AND REASON FOR LEAVING, JULY 1983**  
( ' 000)

Reason for leaving	Duration of last full-time job(a)							Total
	Less than one year (weeks)				1 and under 5 years	5 years and over		
	Under 4	4 and under 8	8 and under 26	26 and under 52			Total	
MALES								
Retrenched/lost job	7.2	8.7	38.0	33.9	87.9	67.1	27.0	181.9
Job was temporary or seasonal	6.6	5.5	10.2	4.0	26.3	*	*	28.2
Other reasons(b)	3.4	4.1	15.6	11.4	34.4	28.4	17.2	80.0
All reasons	17.2	18.3	63.8	49.3	148.6	97.4	44.2	290.2
FEMALES								
Retrenched/lost job	*	3.8	16.8	8.9	31.5	10.2	3.9	45.6
Job was temporary or seasonal	4.4	3.2	7.7	*	16.0	*	*	16.8
Other reasons(b)	*	3.0	10.6	8.7	24.3	18.5	7.2	50.1
All reasons	8.5	10.0	35.1	18.2	71.8	29.6	11.1	112.5
PERSONS								
Retrenched/lost job	9.2	12.5	54.7	42.9	119.3	77.3	30.8	227.5
Job was temporary or seasonal	10.9	8.7	17.9	4.7	42.2	*	*	45.1
Other reasons(b)	5.5	7.1	26.2	20.0	58.8	46.9	24.4	130.1
All reasons	25.7	28.3	98.9	67.6	220.4	127.0	55.3	402.7

(a) Lasting two weeks or more. (b) Includes unsatisfactory work arrangements; own ill health or injury; to marry; to have children; to look after family; spouse transferred; to travel or take a holiday; to return to studies.